

Cross-Cultural Influences on Bargaining:

An Arab-American Experimental Study

by

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## Abstract

This study is an experimental investigation of bargaining by people of different cultural backgrounds: Arab and American. This study is intra-cultural in that two kinds of same culture dyads were observed: Arab-Arab and American-American. However, this study is also inter-cultural; it included comparable instances of Arabs bargaining with Americans. For each of the three experimental types, the experimental design was the same. Each experimental session contained six bargaining rounds. In all bargaining sessions, the resources were valued in such a way that equity was difficult to determine. Thus the mixed-motive qualities of the game were emphasized. All sessions were videotaped and content analyzed, using a coding system developed by Sillars. There were 24 trials, eight for each of the three experimental conditions. No results were statistically significant. However, Arabs were generally more effective bargainers than Americans in the inter-cultural condition. Some differences in verbal strategies between Arabs and Americans were found. However, they were not consistent with the bulk of the literature reviewed. Whereas the literature emphasized the competitiveness of Arabs in negotiation situations,

it was found that Arabs were more integrative than American subjects in the inter-cultural negotiations. While much of the literature in cross-cultural communication emphasizes communication barriers which are culturally induced, findings of this study are not supportive of the generality of that view.

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## Dedication

To Dave --

Whose confidence and support have made this effort possible.

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## Introduction

This study is an investigation of Arab and American subjects in an experimental bargaining situation. For the study, a series of experimental tests involving dyadic negotiation and exchange were conducted. Three kinds of dyads were constructed: the first pairing two American subjects, the second two Arab subjects, and the third an American and an Arab subject. The following research questions are addressed. Is cultural background an important condition in determining the outcome of dyadic bargaining? Are different types of verbal strategies employed by the two cultural groups during negotiation? Is there a connection between the types and/or frequency of verbal strategies used by a subject and his/her effectiveness in the bargaining experiment?

One aim of this research is to establish whether significant differences in negotiation style, as evidenced by verbal strategies, between Arab and American subject groups can be detected in a laboratory setting. Also of interest to the study is the relationship between the use of certain verbal bargaining strategies by subjects and their success in negotiating exchanges. These concerns are embedded in the idea that, despite communication barriers, subjects from different cultural

backgrounds are able to communicate with each other.

Subjects' effectiveness in bargaining was measured by the rates of exchange they were able to negotiate in the experimental sessions. The analysis of the verbal strategies used by the subjects entailed content analysis of videotapes of the experiments. In the content analysis, based on a coding system developed by Alan Sillars (1980), types of strategies, their frequency, and the variations used were assessed. In addition, the length of time used by the subjects to reach agreement was related to types of strategies used and the rates of exchanges achieved in the experiment.

The following hypotheses were investigated.

1. The Arab subjects use more types of verbal strategies than the American subjects.
2. The greater the number of types of verbal strategies used, the greater the bargaining effectiveness.

Therefore:

3. Arab subjects are more effective in bargaining than the American subjects.

Furthermore:

4. In bargaining there are no significant differences in communication effectiveness between the same culture dyads and the different culture dyads.

However:

5. In gaining similar effectiveness, there is a greater frequency of communication for the different culture dyads than for the same culture dyads.

It should be noted that this research was of an exploratory nature. The purpose of the hypotheses has been to help structure the research and the analysis of the data.

These hypotheses are based on the following ideas. The structure of negotiation entails a series of information exchanges between individuals. This information, in part, consists of a series of verbal strategies. Types of verbal strategies reflect both the cooperative and competitive interests of negotiators. If outcomes are a function of communication effectiveness, then it may be plausible to argue that the greater the frequency and variation of strategy types used, the greater the bargaining effectiveness will be. If Arab subjects use a greater number of types of strategies, they will be more effective bargainers.

Bargaining interaction is intentional. Bargaining participants have specific goals to be reached through interaction. Furthermore, there is a structure to the bargaining process which is not culture-bound. For

example, bargaining can involve a series of offers and counteroffers by the two subjects. The logical structure of this process, because it is not culture-bound, provides a known sequence to which the communications of self and other can be compared. As a consequence, communication errors can be more easily and precisely identified by subjects in bargaining than in less structured interactions. Thus there should be no significant difference in the effectiveness of communication between same culture and intercultural dyads. However, in reaching similar levels of effectiveness it may be that a greater volume of communication will be required in intercultural dyads as compared to same culture dyads.

## Nature of The Study And Related Research

### A Problem in Cross-Cultural Communication

A substantial volume of research has been done in cross-cultural communication. One of the major areas of emphasis has been the investigation of cultural barriers to communication. That area of concern is particularly pertinent to this study. At issue is the possible effects of cultural barriers on dyadic bargaining. Some scholars have argued that, due to cross-cultural barriers, effective communication between cultures is impossible. If that is so, effective bargaining between subjects of different cultures is not possible. Without effective communication, offers could not be understood and, as a consequence, could not generate appropriate responses. Other scholars have taken the position that, while not completely inhibiting, these barriers make communication difficult. If that is the case, perhaps greater frequency of communication is needed for intercultural communication. For example, in bargaining interactions in which time is limited (as was the case in this study) intercultural interactions may reach the time limit more often than interactions between subjects of the same culture.

What are the sources of communication barriers?

Larry A. Samovar and Richard E. Porter (1976) identified eight variables in the communication process which are

determined, at least in part, by culture. They argued that these variables influenced individuals' perceptions and thus the meanings attributed to behavior. The variables in the communication process are attitudes, social organization of the culture, thought patterns or forms of reasoning, societal roles and expectations, language skill, concept of space, time sense, and nonverbal communication. Individuals from different cultures may find it difficult to share meaning in communication with each other because they stand at different points on cultural variables.

In his book, Beyond Culture (1979), Edward T. Hall analyzed cultures as being of high or low context. Communication in high context involves information passed in a physical context or internalized in the person. Low context communication is highly explicit. Differences in context between cultures can be a barrier to individuals in communication.

An example of this difference in culture context was offered by Philip Harris and Robert Moran (1970). They stated that the American culture is one of low context; thus Americans emphasize sending accurate information messages and understand others' messages on the basis of what is said. In contrast, Japanese culture is one of extremely high context. The Japanese look for meaning

in what is not said directly and find significance in pauses and silences. The differences in context make understanding far more difficult.

Karen Ann Watson (1977) found communication to be embedded in culture. She stated that there are "...assumptions underlying everyday life, shared by members of a society by virtue of constant interaction from birth, assumptions which are so much a part of the culture that they are not even consciously held" (p. 103) which profoundly influence understanding in language. She argued that learning the language is not sufficient for cross-cultural communication because social rules, rules for speaking, must be mastered along with the linguistic rules.

John C. Condon (1978) asserted that an individual's reasoning process, and thus his/her persuasive arguments, are profoundly affected by cultural variations. He delineated four areas of variation in persuasive communication as pertinent: language, nonverbal communication, value differences, and reasoning or rhetorical styles. Condon felt that these areas of variation refute any assumption that persuasion could be culture-free.

Condon's view of the obstacles to persuasive communication presented by cultural background appear

quite similar to the more general concerns of Watson and Samovar and Porter. While they do not argue the impossibility of cross-cultural communication, all suggest that extensive knowledge of a culture is requisite for effective communication between people of different cultures.

In a linguistic comparison of levels of meaning among three different nation groups in the translation of international diplomatic communications, Edmund S. Glenn (1966) argued that even when immediate meanings are shared, latent meanings exist which cannot be translated. According to Glenn, "Latent meanings may correlate with broad patterns of national behavior, including collective processes of decision making.... the underlying causes of conflict correlate with the communication that doesn't take place. As far as the communication that does take place, it apparently correlates only with the immediate and the superficial" (p. 272).

In discussing the concept of national character, Jaris Draguns (1979) stated that, while a "concept of national character, in the sense of a uniform set of characteristics being associated with a nation state" (p. 135) is obsolete, traditional behavior patterns occurred along with modern behaviors in individuals and



had an effect on interactions.

Hamid Mowlana and Ann Elizabeth Robinson (1977) argued that competitive politics in contemporary society is characterized by "ethnic politics" and that these ethnic preferences are "intense and not negotiable" (p. 54). They asserted that issues in conflict resolution, and particularly diplomacy, must address ethnic consensus and conflict.

Yet, Robert Jervis (1976), in applying and critiquing a variety of theories of conflict resolution to actual policy making in international relations, excluded any mention of effects of cultural variations.

It is clear then that cultural differences do create communication barriers between individuals. The significance of these communication barriers is heightened by the costs of not communicating in situations of cross-cultural conflict resolution. It is probable that increased cultural knowledge and sensitivity help bridge these barriers.

However, it should be noted that effective communication occurs regularly among people from different cultural backgrounds. These individuals, frequently without extensive sensitivity to or knowledge of cultural variations, still manage to communicate with each other: about personal issues, business, and

even international relations. While individuals may be hindered by barriers, they still accomplish their goals, even in conflict situations.

It is the position of this research that an underlying structure of intentionality serves to bridge the cultural barriers involved in communicating with individuals from another culture. Individuals communicate for a reason, a purpose. As such, they are able to overcome barriers, although sometimes with difficulty, in order to achieve their interaction goals. Of interest to this research is not simply the existence of barriers, but how people are able to deal with barriers.

One communication area in which intentionality is particularly important is conflict resolution, an area in which individuals must interact to pursue their cooperative and competitive interests. For example, Samovar and Porter are undoubtedly correct that different cultures have different thought patterns and forms of reasoning. However, are all cultures different in all patterns and forms? If a process of conflict resolution like bargaining exists in different cultures, will that process, and the intentionality upon which it is based, produce similar thought and reasoning patterns across cultures? If so, then, for shared social processes, at least some kinds of communications barriers may not

exist.

Similarly the issue of high and low context raised by Hall and investigated by Harris and Moran may vary little between cultures for some communication processes; such variation may be small because those processes are shared between the cultures. Similar comments could be made for Condon's view of reasoning processes, Glenn's view of shared meanings, and the others discussed above. Certainly there are important cultural variations which can produce communication barriers. But, it seems wrong to assume that those barriers must be equally present for all kinds of interactions.

#### Research Issues in Cross-Cultural Communication

Some scholars have argued that cultural barriers to communication make any cross-cultural study questionable. Janice Hepworth (1978) questioned the value of much cross-cultural research study done in the behavioral sciences, and most particularly, experimental studies. She argued that American researchers have simply extended American research design with little consideration of what their effect or meaning is for subjects from different cultures. Further, she argued that language is a major problem because of differences in sub-surface translation (from the subject culture's native language) or problems in using English (as the

subject culture's second language). In this regard her concerns are similar to problems in meaning described by Glenn.

In discussing the controversy over interpretation of observed behavior in other cultures, Lenore Loeb Adler (1982) recognized the difficulties cited by Hepworth, but argued that cross-cultural experimentation should be done. She suggested that perhaps scholars should "narrow the breadth of conclusions" (p. 10) and that in analyzing results, "we ought to be looking for variability and its cultural sources, rather than explaining it away when we find it" (p. 11).

Hepworth may be right. Experimental study may have such widely different meaning for people of different cultures that results should not be compared across cultures. However, since she offers no proof for her position, it could also be argued, consistent with Adler, that the control which is possible in experimental study is of the greatest possible importance for the isolation of cross-cultural differences and the precise investigation of the interactions of people from different cultures.

Furthermore, it has been argued that, in cross-cultural research too much attention has been given to isolating specific cultural variables,

particularly of the foreign cultures, while interaction between individuals from different cultures has been largely ignored. Tulsi B. Saral (1979) termed this type of research intracultural rather than intercultural. Stating that, to his knowledge, there had been no research in "interactional processes that occur when two or more individuals, believing in different modes of communicative reality, attempt to communicate with one another" (p. 397), Saral argued for the need for research in communication interaction.

In support of that position, R. Michael Paige (1983) urged cross-cultural researchers to follow "new lines of inquiry into the mutual impact of intercultural contact on the attitudes of both American and foreign students" (p. 103). Paige argued that,

our understanding of inter-cultural relations is incomplete because little attention has been directed toward the role of the sojourner, representing the influence of the minority culture, in the process of intercultural learning among the members of the host country.  
(p. 103)

Paige felt that, while cultural differences in values, perceptions and skills complicate communication,

the interaction through communication of the majority and minority populations is significant in its effects on the majority populations.

A study by Siti Suprpto questioned the idea of cultural background variations leading to communication breakdown. He studied conversations between an Indonesian/Javanese physician and his American patients. He found that two particular behaviors, the doctor's culturally-based strategy of using a type of deference statement in requesting information, and laughter, which differed in appropriateness from his patients' expectations, were accommodated by the patients. Suprpto found that these discrepancies, rather than leading to communication breakdown, were instead stimuli for conversation. He concluded that, when participants realize each other's expectations for the relationship, effective communication across cultures is still possible. Suprpto's research directly addresses the question of communication barriers within the context of interactional behavior as called for by Saral.

In contrast, there is a significant body of research having to do with cross-cultural conflict resolution which is not interactional, but instead focuses on the comparison of variables in different cultures.

In some cases, researchers have not found

culturally-based variation. In a study of managerial influence, David Kipnis (1984) examined influence strategies used by managers in the United States, Australia, and Great Britain and found no difference in the relative use of different strategies by managers of different countries.

In a study of conflict resolution tactics between married people in Japan, India, and the United States, Fumie Kumagai and Murray A. Straus (1983) focused on the incidence of violence and methods of resolving differences. Although the incidence of violence was highest in American couples, no significant differences in the way disputes were settled was uncovered in the three nation groups. Conflict resolution tactics were based on the principles of reciprocity in all three cultures.

However, other studies have found significant cultural differences. In a study similar to that of Kumagai and Straus, V. Tellis-Nayak and Gearoid O'Donoghue (1982) found differences occurring among Irish, Indian (Asian), and American cultures. Again the level of violence was highest among Americans. However, they found a much greater incidence of male or female dominated relationships in India, in contrast to the idea of reciprocity. Their conclusion was that Indian and Irish role and status distinctions between

couples minimize marital conflict.

The bargaining behavior of children and adolescents from three cultures (India, Argentina, and the United States) was investigated by Daniel Druckman, Alan A. Benton, Faizunisa Ali, and J. Susan Bagur (1976). They found the strongest effects were those of culture. Indian bargainers negotiated longer, were more competitive, and had larger ranges in their settlements than either the Argentinean or American subjects. Americans were most compromising in their offers. While males were more competitive in India and the United States, Argentinean females were more aggressive than their male counterparts.

These studies, of which some found for cultural variation and some did not, would be termed intracultural by Saral, as they do not involve interaction between cultural groups. Studies which compare communication patterns in two or more cultures have had interesting results. But these studies may or may not directly bear upon intercultural studies as that term is used by Saral. For example, knowing the strategies used by managers in the United States and Britain does not mean that we can infer the kind of strategy a Briton might use when managing in the United States. Similarly, bargaining strategies might vary between two cultures. But would



individuals from those two cultures retain their culturally conditioned strategies in intercultural bargaining? At least part of the answer to this problem is found in certain intercultural experiments.

In an experiment by Siegfried Streufer and Sandra Sandler (1973), Chinese and Americans were asked to participate on teams representing their culture in a tactical and negotiation game simulating an international political issue. Participants were asked to rate their own and their opponents' success and failure. It was found that while American and Chinese subjects did not markedly differ in how they rated their own success, Chinese participants perceived their opponents to be much more successful than the American participants did.

James Alcock (1975) conducted dyadic bargaining experiments in which the payoff matrix varied from equality to inequality, using Canadian and East Indian subjects. He found that while Canadians were more cooperative in the advantaged position, the opposite was true for East Indian subjects who were more competitive in the position of advantage.

In a laboratory experiment in which Japanese and American businessmen played a negotiation game, John Graham (1980) found significant cultural differences between the two groups. Successful performance was

found to be more important in terms of satisfaction with the experiment for American subjects than for the Japanese. Americans received higher performance scores by making opponents feel uncomfortable, while Japanese scored better by making opponents feel comfortable. It was noted that communication problems occurred during the negotiations. In some cases participants appeared to focus on quantitative information and pre-set goals. In these cases fewer new alternative solutions were suggested and mutual solutions were reduced.

Studies involving interaction between cultures have addressed Saral's call for intercultural research in cross-cultural study. They demonstrate not only the existence of cultural variations, but also the possibility of individuals from different cultures interacting, despite communication and cultural barriers, to achieve their task.

This research recognizes that language and cultural barriers can exist and that these barriers can present problems in doing research -- particularly experimental research, as discussed by Hepworth and discovered in Graham's study of American and Japanese businessmen. However, it is essential to remember that communication regularly occurs between people of different cultures in spite of those cultural barriers. As has been pointed

out by Saral and others, understanding more about this interaction, its conditions and effects, is as important as understanding the barriers to interaction.

This research is intercultural in that it includes subjects from two cultures in interaction with each other. What is of interest is how those subjects interact, in spite of possible communication barriers. But this research is also intracultural in that two of the experimental conditions were composed by pairing two subjects from the same culture, the Arab-Arab condition and the American-American condition. The two types of mono-culture dyads form a point of reference (two control groups) for the intercultural dyads.

A greater understanding of intercultural communication seems particularly significant in the context of conflict resolution. Important interactions between individuals of different cultures occur daily, in business and in politics, with cooperative and competitive interests. With this in mind, the research design entailed an experimental bargaining situation in which two subjects pursued cooperative and competitive interests.

Does bargaining evidence a structure of intentionality? Does that structure allow individuals from different cultures to overcome communication barriers caused by cultural variations? Linda L. Putnam

and Tricia S. Jones (1982) pointed out that in bargaining the emphasis is on "intentionality, rational rules of behavior, and strategic logic" (p. 263). As to the role of communication in bargaining, they stated that it functions as a means of coordinating outcomes, a form of information exchange, expression of strategic action, and a means of identifying patterns of behavior. The given patterns of intentional action required of subjects in bargaining experiments can decrease the possibilities for misunderstanding. Because bargaining entails a series of related communications to and feedback from another subject, there are continual opportunities to correct misunderstandings.

Finally, since it is an activity that occurs in a number of real-life contexts across a variety of cultures, bargaining is appropriate for intercultural, cross-cultural study. As such, it puts the foreign subjects at less of a disadvantage than other types of experiments which may be more culture-specific. Most foreign subjects have participated in bargaining activities at home and have also had to do so in the United States. In some cultures bargaining skills are highly developed. In that case it may be that, not foreign subjects, but American subjects are disadvantaged.

### Arab Culture and American-Arab Communication

It is widely believed that members of Arab cultures have highly developed bargaining skills. Are Arabs more effective than Americans? Certainly verbal skills and an appreciation for language and its use have historically been very important in Arab cultures. Traditionally bargaining has been an important element in economic life in Arab nations. Arabs are reputed to be extremely persistent, if sometimes unreasonable, in bargaining and negotiation. In fact, a common stereotype held by many Americans about Arabs is that in bargaining situations they are emotional, confrontative, pugnacious, and long-winded.

Generally, and for the purposes of this research, Arab countries have been defined to include Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, Egypt, Sudan, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, South Yemen, and the Persian Gulf Principalities. Certain other Middle Eastern countries, such as Iran, Turkey, and Israel, are not considered Arab countries because of language or religious differences. Raphael Patai (1983) listed six criteria for inclusion: speaking Arabic, being raised in an Arab culture, living in an Arab country, belief in Islam, cherishing the memory of the Arab Empire, and citizenship of an Arab nation. Of these, he felt that

the linguistic criterion of speaking Arabic is the most universal and the most valid. It should be noted that the present national boundaries of Arab nations have not historically been as they are now and, even in contemporary times, many people have lived in more than one country. Thus, many Arabs have a much stronger identity as Arabs than as members of a particular nation.

Historically Arabian people were identified as being in one of three socio-economic groups: urban dwellers, farmers, and Bedouins. These groups have had both similarities and differences. Urban life can be traced back to earliest historical times. William Polk (1980) noted that Mecca was an international city of trade even before the birth of Muhammad in 570 A.D. The center of Mecca and other cities was the mosque and the market place. Farmers provided food for urban dwellers, sold through the market place, and also traded with Bedouins. Historically the chief business of the Bedouins was long-distance import and export. This involved extensive interaction with foreign civilizations. However, according to Patai and Joel Carmichael (1977), this was also the basis for the development of a strong internal-external sense in regard to other peoples. The Bedouins accepted only the authority of their tribes; relationships with others were marked by feelings of

strong independence and a sense of equality. While there were differences, all three groups shared a common language, a strong oral tradition, and the market place as an important part of their lives.

Polk argued that the role of language, by the late 19th century, was the core of Arab identity. He said, "The speakers of Arabic found language, even more than Islamic religion, on which they disagreed, to be the core of their culture. The centrality of the language, the fascination with the word, the concern with the medium rather than the message has long been seen as a distinctive Semitic characteristic. Language is not an art form, it is the art of the Arabs" (p. 301-302). Polk pointed to the strong oral tradition, with its emphasis on the memorization of poetry and prayer, as evidence of this.

Fahlawi means, in Persian, a sharp-witted, clever person. Patai described the characteristics of the Fahlawi personality, which he felt to be common, though not universal, in Arab men. These characteristics are

1. ready adaptability (which can hide true feelings)
2. self assertion - a persistent tendency to dominate things; demonstrate superiority
3. exaggerated self-reliance
4. reliance on individual activity and preference for it over group activity. (p. 107)

These characteristics are, perhaps, common to the view of the Arab as perceived by many Americans. Robert Trice (1981) found, in a study of pro-Arab policy lobby groups in the United States, that it is a view shared by many Americans of Arab extraction and other pro-Arab Americans. The Arab leaders in these lobbies who were not American-born were described as "domineering" and "obstinate" (p. 124). A major complaint of others in the groups was that foreign-born Arabs could not present policy positions in an effective manner because of their emphasis on rhetoric and confrontational statements.

It is possible that much of the reason for this perception comes from the Arabic language itself. Patai noted that, "Much of this predilection for exaggeration and overemphasis is anchored in the Arab language itself... the Arabic verb has various emphatic forms....The Arabic verb also has special forms of conjugations which indicate a greater intensity of activity" (p. 52).

Repetition is also at issue. "If an Arab wishes to impress his interlocutor with having definitely made up his mind to embark on a certain course of action, he will state several times what he intends to do, using series of assertions, often with increasing emphasis, and always with slight stylistic variations" (p. 53).



Khalid Mansour (1977) argued that the American stereotype of Arabs as pugnacious and emotional is enhanced by certain aspects of Arabic language. In discussing problems of communication in Arab-American diplomacy, he said,

A student of Arabic realizes that exaggerations are used not necessarily to emphasize a point but rather because of linguistic exigencies of the tawkid, that is, the rule of emphatic assertion. A vehement reaction, loaded with threats, far from portraying a propensity to conflict, might be meant only to insult and humiliate the adversary.... The truth and untruth of the statement...is irrelevant. What is relevant is the potency of the insult as conveyed by the words and similes used....The tendency toward sloganeering in contemporary Arab politics is an outgrowth of this linguistic heritage. Slogans are repeated as if they would eventually be made to come true by the very dint of repeating them... (p. 141-142)

However, other scholars have viewed the significance of these cultural differences in another light. Maxime Rodinson (1981), while recognizing that language creates

a bond among Arab peoples, argued against forming any comprehensive picture of Arab culture or cultural traits. Rodinson felt that individual differences are far more important than shared cultural traits.

In an anthropological study of Middle Eastern bargaining, Fuad Khuri (1968) found that bargaining practices were integrative, not conflictual. He noted that while in bargaining, discussions were often emotional and extended, much of the interaction was designed to promote trust and establish a client relationship between the buyer and the seller. Khuri said that bargaining served two purposes: the pursuit of economic goals and social recognition. To that end, "Since profit in bargaining is translated into social recognition, seller-bargainers in the Middle East resort to all sorts of polite formulas to affect the economic choice of their partners" (p. 705). He further noted that expressions of respect, affection and common trust, as well as references to common friends and relatives, always preceded any negative or conflictual statements.

It is not clear to what extent cultural stereotypes about Arab culture are accurate and what the role of communication barriers is in fostering misperceptions. However, it is clear that these issues are important.

John Laffin (1975), although recognizing the

differences in Arab and American communication styles, felt that those differences were not insurmountable and that "Westerners, for the sake of rational relationships, must comprehend differences" (p. 23).

Laffin's appeal may be extremely pertinent. Farideh Salili (1983) noted that "in recent years, despite increased interaction between the Moslem and Western worlds, understanding has decreased" (p. 143). Instead, stereotypes and misconceptions about Arabs have increased and become more negative.

Many issues of culture and communication as they relate to Arab peoples have not been adequately addressed. For example, in a 1979 study, Geert Hofstede examined the connection between values and culture. Yet no Arab countries were included in the study. The book, Counseling Across Cultures, (Paul Pedersen, W.J. Lonner and Jaris G. Draguns, eds., 1976), is one of the most widely used books in the field of foreign student counseling. Although Arab students represent one of the three largest cultural groups studying in the United States, the book makes almost no reference to issues of counseling these students, even though an entire section is devoted to specific ethnic and cultural considerations.

Goals of this research include examining whether there is substance to the idea that Arabs are particularly

effective bargainers. Are Arabs different from Americans in their bargaining style (as measured by verbal tactics)? Are there communication barriers and if they exist are they surmountable? Since it directly pertains to stereotyping Arabs as pugnacious and conflictual, does the style of bargaining most commonly used by Arabs focus on distributive (competitive) tactics? Or is the style integrative as Khuri asserts? Also of interest is whether Arab bargaining style differs between bargaining situations with Americans and with other Arabs. If Arabs adopt a style of bargaining when interacting with Americans which is different from that of the Americans, is that difference due to a fixed style which is culturally determined? Or is it due to the fact that they are interacting with someone of a different culture? Similar questions pertain to the fixedness or flexibility of Americans. By comparing mono-cultural and intercultural dyads, perhaps some answers may be found to these questions.

#### Communication and The Experimental Study of Negotiation

J.A. Rubin and B. Brown describe bargaining as a "process whereby two or more parties attempt to settle what each shall give and take or perform and receive, in a transaction between them" (p. 2). There is opposition of interest between participants. However,

negotiation is a joint decision making process because this opposition of interest is tempered by interdependence of the participants in reaching a settlement.

Mixed-motive bargaining situations involve both the conflict of opposing interests and the need to cooperate to make an agreement profitable to both. Mixed-motive bargaining experiments require that all participants be able to profit from the exchange reached in negotiation, but that the degree of profitability be in competition. Thus bargaining is based jointly on distributive (competitive) and integrative (cooperative) elements.

Initial research on the role of communication in bargaining took a very limited approach. According to Putnam and Jones (1982), "...experimenters tested the effects of availability of communication (restricted or nonrestricted) and the orientation of negotiators (cooperative or competitive) on bargaining outcomes. This manipulation of communication centered upon the flow and transmission of messages, rather than upon the type or meaning of information" (p. 265).

Furthermore, experimental research has frequently involved designs which effectively eliminate or stringently limit any communication interaction among experimental subjects. Examples of this type of research include studies on threats in bargaining situations by

L.A. Borah, Jr. (1963), M. Deutsch and R.M. Krauss (1960), P.J. Geiwitz (1967), and H.A. Hornstein (1965). However, H.H. Kelley (1965) asserted that in this type of study the limitations to the threat communications were so stringent that there were difficulties in the participants being able to perceive the communications as threats.

Since those early studies, the study of the role of communication in bargaining experiments has expanded. Putnam and Jones (1982) stated that emphasis on communication has shifted from the flow of messages to the study of the types and effects of communication as part of the negotiation process. This shift has occurred as part of the change in focus from negotiation outcome to negotiation process.

Some experimental studies have addressed the relationship of communication to negotiation outcome. Henry McCarthy (1977) found that, in an experimental study in which subjects with divergent belief systems participated in discussions, communication among subjects served to reduce the intensity of the conflict, while lack of communication served to increase the intensity.

The Miller, Brehmer and Hammond experimental study (1970) demonstrated that there was a significant difference in conflict resolution between dyads which discussed

their policies and practices and those dyads which did not. Those results were corroborated in another study done by Brehmer (1971) which further specified that communication increased agreements between subjects by increasing their perceived policy similarities.

Justin Schulz and Dean Pruitt (1978) investigated whether the use of a competitive (individual) orientation or cooperative (team) orientation produced higher joint incomes when two conditions were met: either the subjects were allowed a high level of communication for information exchange or, when faced with limitations on communication, they were able to prioritize the issues in dispute, such that larger concessions could be made on less important issues.

Though this research did not systematically vary the amount of communication between experimental runs, it did investigate a number of possible relations between communications in the bargaining process and the outcome of negotiations. Are some tactics more effective than others in avoiding confrontations, in reaching favorable agreements, or both? To address this question the subjects' communications were content analyzed. Content analysis measures are well established procedures in the area of conflict resolution for both experimental and descriptive studies.

Robert Bales (1950) developed a category system, Interaction Process Analysis, to record observations of verbal and nonverbal behavior in social interaction. This category system, while primarily applied to small group behavior, was developed by Bales to be relevant to a broad range of social systems. In fact, Bales's Interaction Process Analysis has been applied in both experimental and naturalistic settings.

In order to study compliance-gaining strategies in persuasive situations, William Schenck-Hamlin, Richard L. Wiseman, and G.N. Georgacarakos (1982) developed a content analytic model. With their model, they were able to distinguish compliance-gaining messages from other message types.

Thomas Beisecker (1970) used content analysis measurement as part of an investigation of verbal persuasive strategies in mixed-motive bargaining experiments. He found that "Under conditions where communication can influence the outcome of an interaction it can be used cooperatively and/or competitively..." (p. 160) and that the use of communication strategies was related to the amount of conflictual interest perceived by the subjects and the persistence with which subjects maintained their positions.

The content analytic category system used in this



research was developed by Alan L. Sillars (1980). This category system has been used by Sillars and associates for a variety of conflict situations. Sillars's coding system divides communication acts into three categories, with each category consisting of a number of types of statements. Avoidance acts minimize discussion of the conflict; distributive acts are competitive or individualistic; integrative acts are cooperative and disclosive.

Sillars's categories fit well the structural conditions of mixed-motive bargaining. The two motives of the game correspond to the distributive and integrative categories, while the avoidance category indicates a third dimension to strategy variance. If Arab and American subjects have different bargaining strategies, the concentration of communications in one or another of the categories should differ. Thus, the counts, obtained from the content analysis, are the measure of strategy types. For this analysis, as detailed in Chapter III, the design of the experiments allowed open negotiations limited only by certain time constraints.

## Method

### Experimental Design

The experimental design for this study called for two subjects to negotiate the exchange of counters (checker pieces) with each other. The counters served as symbolic resources and were assigned points.

Subjects for the experiments were American and Arab students at the University of Kansas. Only male students were solicited for the following reasons. First, the number of Arab female students at KU is much smaller than the number of male Arab students. Therefore, the male/female ratio for the pool of Arab subjects would have been markedly different than the pool of American subjects. Second, because of significant differences in sex roles between Arab males and females, Arab female subjects might have behaved differently from Arab males, as well as from American female subjects. While restricting the study to males may have limited its scope implications, it was felt that the elimination of possibly confounding gender differences for this exploratory study was the more important consideration.

American subjects were recruited from undergraduate Sociology classes. Arab students were randomly selected from a list of Arab males studying at the University of Kansas. This list was compiled from a roster of Arab

students at the University of Kansas, during Spring Semester 1985, but excluded graduate students and students studying English at the Applied English Center. These exclusions guaranteed that the Arab subjects chosen were reasonably proficient in English and that their ages and educational experience were not unlike the American subjects.

The experiment, based on a design by David Willer (1984), consisted of 24 trials. Since each trial had two subjects, there was a total of 48 subjects. For each of the three experimental conditions (both participants being American, both being Arab, and one being American and one being Arab), eight experimental trials were run. The conditions for the experimental trials, under all three conditions, were identical, and, in all cases, the goal of each subject was to negotiate the best possible exchange for himself.

Each experimental trial consisted of six bargaining (and exchange) periods. Each trial was divided into two parts of three periods. For each period subjects were given counters to represent resources and were asked to negotiate and, if possible, agree upon a rate of exchange. Each period began with the allocation of resources for exchange and ended with the conclusion of bargaining by the subjects and, when agreement was reached, with the exchange of resources.

Subjects were initially assigned to either an A or B position which differed by the score values for the counters. For each bargaining period, A received 15 black counters and B 10 red counters. Each counter A retained was worth one point; each counter A received from exchanging with B was worth one point. A was allowed to exchange any number of counters with B, but all of B's counters had to be exchanged as a unit. Thus, A's goal in exchange was to receive all 10 of B's counters, while giving B as few counters as possible.

Of the 10 red counters allocated to B for each bargaining period, each counter B retained was worth no points. However, each counter B received from A was worth one point. Since B's 10 counters could only be exchanged with A as a unit, B's goal in exchange was to gain as many of A's counters as possible in return for all 10 of B's own counters.

Additional rules for bargaining governed the experiment. Any exchange had to be mutually agreed upon by the A and B subjects. Exchange was not mandatory -- if subjects could not agree on an exchange rate, the period ended with no exchange. Long term agreements which extended beyond any one bargaining period were not permitted.

A total of six minutes was allowed for each

bargaining period. When subjects did not reach an agreement after five minutes, they were told that they had one minute in which to reach an agreement or decide not to exchange. After the additional minute, they were asked to report if any exchange agreement had been reached.

As indicated, the experiment consisted of two parts, each including three bargaining periods. After three periods, subjects traded positions with A becoming B and vice versa. Then the two engaged in three more bargaining periods following the same rules. A coin toss determined which participant initially assumed the A position. In the American-Arab condition, it was necessary for the A position in the first part of the experiment to be assigned to American subjects in half the sessions and to Arab subjects in the other half. In order to assure this split, the result of the coin toss in one American-Arab session had to be falsified.

Each experimental session began with an introduction. Subjects were seated opposite each other at a table in the experimental room. The experimenter introduced the subjects to each other by their first names, introduced herself and made a brief statement about the experiment. This statement included the information that the experiment was an investigation of bargaining and exchange between individuals. However, it was not

disclosed that cultural variations were being studied as part of that investigation. During the introduction, the subjects were informed that the experiment would be videotaped and that after completion of the study the tape would be erased.

Written instructions for the subjects were prepared (Appendix A) and were given to the subjects to read. When they finished reading the instructions, the experimenter reviewed the instructions with the subjects orally. Subjects were encouraged to ask questions about how the experiment worked at that time.

As part of this discussion, the subjects were told that the instructions were for the first part of the experiment and that they would receive instructions for the second part when the first part was concluded. Subjects were told that the second part of the experiment lasted approximately the same amount of time as the first, that the entire experiment would last less than one hour, and that they would be asked to complete a brief written questionnaire (Appendix B) at the conclusion of the second part. An explanation of the video equipment was also included. However, the subjects were not told that the change occurring between the first and second parts of the experiment was simply the reversal of A for B (and B for A) positions.

The subjects were then asked to sign the written consent form (Appendix C). Following that, the experimenter flipped a coin to see which subject would assume the A position and which the B.

As the experiment began, the subjects were given the appropriate counters, the starting time was recorded, and the subjects were told to begin the first period. Subjects then negotiated until they reached (or agreed that they could not reach) an agreement, within the specified time limits. The first period was concluded when an agreement was reached and subjects exchanged counters, when subjects agreed to discontinue negotiation, or when six minutes of negotiation had elapsed. At that point the score and time were recorded, and the counters were redistributed for the next period. This same sequence was followed until three bargaining periods were completed.

At the conclusion of the third period, subjects were told that the first part of the experiment was over; at that time instructions for the second part of the experiment were given. Subjects were asked to reverse roles: A assumed the B role and B assumed the A role. Subjects were informed that the same rules applied for the second part of the experiment and, when necessary, the rules were repeated. The fourth period began when the counters were distributed, the time noted, and the subjects

indicated that they were ready to resume bargaining.

Subjects followed the same procedure through three more bargaining periods. At the conclusion of the sixth period, videotaping ceased and subjects were told that the experiment was completed. They were thanked for their assistance and asked to take a few moments to complete the questionnaire.

Evaluation of the experimental results focused on three key dependent variables. The measure for subjects' success in negotiation was derived from the scores earned by each subject in the interaction. The numerical difference between the scores earned by each subject was used to judge the subjects' effectiveness.

Also of interest was the number of times subjects were unable or unwilling to reach an exchange agreement. These instances are referred to as holdouts. Scores of 15-0 reflected failure to reach agreement.

As indicated in the discussion of the experimental design, the amount of time taken to reach agreement in each bargaining round was recorded. This measure was also used in analysis.

Analysis of this data was done on three experimental conditions: Arab-American, Arab-Arab and American-American. The Arab-Arab condition was used as a control for Arab results in the Arab-American bargaining sessions; the American-American condition was used for control for



the American subjects in the Arab-American condition. In addition to the comparison of the three experimental conditions, analysis also included comparison of the two subject populations, Arab and American.

At least as important as the outcomes of the exchanges were the verbal tactics used by subjects in negotiating those exchanges. For this reason, all videotaped experimental sessions were content analyzed. This analysis involved the coding of each subject's statements during negotiation, using the category system of Sillars, as previously discussed (Appendix D).

Sillars's coding system involves a number of categories in three major category groups: Avoidance acts, Distributive Acts, and Integrative Acts. For Avoidance Acts, verbal strategies could be coded in any of eight categories: simple denial, extended denial, underresponsiveness, topic shifting, topic avoidance, abstractness, semantic focus, process focus, joking, ambivalence, and pessimism.

Distributive Acts were coded as being faulting, rejection, hostile questioning, hostile joking, presumptive attribution, avoiding responsibility, and prescription. For purposes of this analysis, complaints about the equity of proposed offers and/or unfair treatment in past performance were coded as being faulting. Hostile questioning was used as defined by Sillars. However, in addition, that category was used for a specific type of

interaction which was otherwise extremely difficult to code. Upon occasion, subjects engaged in very rapid, very competitive statements, frequently talking at the same time. These instances were coded as hostile questioning. The prescription category was used for coding all threat and ultimatum communications.

The categories for Integrative Acts included description, qualification, disclosure, soliciting disclosure, negative inquiry, empathy or support, emphasizing commonalities, accepting responsibility, and initiating problem-solving. Their use in the analysis followed the descriptions established by Sillars.

The application of Sillars's coding system to subjects' verbal tactics in the experiment generated data about the total frequency of verbal tactics used by subjects, the frequency of each category used, and the range of tactics used by subjects. The data generated from the analysis of strategies was then related to the rates of exchange generated by the subjects, in the three conditions, and the variations of the two cultural groups involved.

One concern of this research is the relative effectiveness of communication in same culture dyads as compared to intercultural dyads, as mentioned in hypotheses 4 and 5. For this research, the measure of communication

was the presence or absence of an error in the offer/counteroffer sequence. An error was considered to be the making of an offer by one subject which is less advantageous to that subject than a previous offer by the other subject or a statement which made no sense in the context of the interaction. Such statements were separately coded in the analysis of bargaining sessions.

As a measure of reliability, a check on inter-coder agreement was performed, following the procedure set forth by Ole Holsti (1969). Independent coding of two experimental sessions by another Communication Studies graduate student, who received some training in the use of the categories, resulted in observed agreements of 92% and 96%. When the formula for adjustment for inter-coder agreement resulting from chance was applied, agreement was measured as 86% and 93% respectively.

Finally, data from the brief questionnaire (completed by subjects following their participation in the experimental sessions) was used. The questionnaire addressed the subjects' perceptions of their negotiation styles and skills, as well as their perceptions of their fellow students. Questionnaire responses were used to inform and enrich the other data generated.

## Results

In this chapter, the results of the experimental study are analyzed and discussed. Those results include the exchanges negotiated in the bargaining sessions, the incidence of nonagreement between subjects, the amount of time spent by subjects in interaction, and the types of verbal strategies used by subjects. Also reported are instances of communication breakdown, questionnaire results, and observations of the interactions by the experimenter.

Initial summary data for the variables to be analyzed and interpreted in this section are presented in Table 1. Results are presented for each of the three experimental conditions: Arab-American, Arab-Arab, and American-American. For the Arab-Arab and for the American-American conditions, the score differences were determined by subtracting the loser's score from the winner's in each of the eight experimental sessions for that condition. The figures given in Table 1 are the means of that number for the two conditions. For the Arab-American condition, the difference in scores is given in two ways. For the left column, the American score was subtracted from the Arab score, resulting in a mean difference of 3.5. In the second column, the loser's score was subtracted from the winner's (regardless of cultural group), resulting in a mean difference of 5.5.

Although the difference between the winner and loser was used for the tabulation of exchange outcomes, such a distinction was not applicable to all elements of the data. Holdouts and interaction time are interactional data and cannot be attributed to one or another subject in an experiment. Thus the figure reported is representative of interactions in the experimental runs, not of one or the other subject in the bargaining session.

Table 1

Mean Exchange Outcomes, Percent Holdouts and Mean Times  
by Interaction Type

	Arab/American	Arab/American
	(Arab-American)	(winner-loser)
Exchange Outcome: Mean Difference In Scores	3.5	5.5
Holdouts: Percentage of Bargaining Interaction	10%	10%
Time Used for Interaction: Mean	18.75	18.75

Table 1 (Continued)

Mean Exchange Outcomes, Percent Holdouts and Mean Times  
by Interaction Type

	Arab/Arab	American/American
	(winner-loser)	(winner-loser)
Exchange Outcome: Mean Difference In Scores	8.5	4.5
Holdouts: Percentage of Bargaining Interaction	15%	13%
Time Used for Interaction: Mean	19.37	17.25

Analysis of Exchange Outcomes for the Three Experimental Conditions

Differences in exchange outcomes in the three conditions ranged from a high of 36 points (earned in an Arab-Arab exchange) to a low of 1 point (earned in an American-American exchange). The Arab-Arab and American-American conditions each produced one tie. This was in contrast to the three ties produced in the Arab-American experimental condition. (Raw scores for exchange outcome differences in each of the three experimental

conditions are provided in Appendix E.)

In the Arab-American condition, the Arab subjects had, overall, better exchange outcomes. Of the eight sessions, the Arab subjects won three, the Americans two, and three resulted in a tie. For all sessions, Arab subjects scored 28 more points, resulting in a mean difference of 3.5. As seen in Table 1, the mean difference for this condition, when figuring winner-loser differences, is 5.5. This figure falls between the mean difference for the Arab-Arab condition (8.5) and American-American condition (4.5). This suggests that the inter-cultural exchanges were not unlike the mono-cultural ones.

Was the variation of scores between cultures greater or lesser than might normally be expected to occur within mono-cultural interactions? In order to determine the normal variation of mono-cultural experimental results, the following analysis was performed. There was an arbitrary arrangement of the score difference for the Arab-Arab and American-American experimental conditions. In that arrangement, the difference in the scores was calculated by subtracting the scores of subjects who were A's in the first part of the experiment from the scores of subjects who were B's. From these score differences a mean difference of 8 for the Arab-Arab condition and 2.5 for the American-American condition was

derived.

These mean differences were then used for comparison. A bivariate t-test was run to compare the Arab scores in the Arab-American condition to the Arab scores in the Arab-Arab condition and the American scores in the Arab-American condition were compared to the American scores in the American-American condition. In both statistical tests, no significant difference was found.

In addition, a univariate t-test was run to test whether the mean difference of 3.5 found in the Arab-American condition was significantly different from 0. It was found not to be significantly different at the .05 level.

While Arab subjects did better overall in the Arab-American condition, with a difference of 28 more points, that advantage was not significant statistically. Thus it would not appear to uphold the hypothesis that Arabs are better bargainers. However, in looking at the mean differences in all three experimental conditions, no statistically significant differences were found. The lack of statistical significance is not surprising given the very small sample sizes and the variations in outcomes among runs. On the other hand, it would be wrong to assume that the data show that the Arab subjects were not better bargainers than the Americans. Though not statistically significant, the mean difference of 3.5



is similar in magnitude to the 4.5 difference produced by subtracting losers from winners in the American-American condition.

Furthermore, the 5.5 winner-loser mean difference for the Arab-American condition falls between the 8.5 and 4.5 differences for the mono-cultural dyads. This suggests that the inter-cultural data were not different in kind from the mono-cultural data and that communication barriers were not significantly more important than in the mono-cultural dyads.

One measure of communication effectiveness is the standard deviation of exchange outcomes. If there are important communication barriers, outcomes should vary greatly as a consequence. By the same reasoning, assuming there is some determinancy to the experiment, if communication is effective, error variance should be small.

In fact, the standard deviation of the outcomes of the inter-cultural (Arab-American) condition was between the standard deviation of the outcomes of the two mono-cultural conditions. This suggests that communication barriers due to cultural differences were not important phenomena in the study.

#### Holdouts

As previously described, holdouts refer to those instances in which subjects were not able to reach a

mutually agreed upon exchange. In the experimental sessions, such holdouts sometimes occurred at the deadline time of six minutes. At other times subjects mutually agreed before the deadline time that no exchange was possible. As noted in Table 1, there was little difference in the number of holdouts occurring in the three experimental conditions. The Arab-American condition produced 5 holdouts, for 10% of the interactions. The Arab-Arab condition produced 7 holdouts, for 15%. The American-American condition produced 6 holdouts, for 13%. While little importance can be attached to such small differences, it is interesting to note that the inter-cultural (Arab-American) condition produced the fewest number of holdouts.

#### Interaction Time

The mean time for interaction for each of the three experimental conditions is also shown in Table 1. As can be seen, the mean time for the inter-cultural condition, 18.75, falls between the mean for the Arab-Arab condition, 19.37, and the American-American condition, 17.25. If it is assumed that the amount of communication is indicated at least in part, by interaction time, these figures do not support the hypothesis that a greater amount of communication is necessary, in order to overcome communication barriers caused by cultural differences in inter-cultural bargaining.

However, given that effective bargaining was observed in the Arab-American condition, it may be that an increased amount of communication was simply not necessary for effective bargaining under the inter-cultural condition. These results can be contrasted to the study by Graham in which it was found that interaction between American and Japanese businessmen in an experimental setting frequently degenerated to simple numerical bidding, involving little time but also little interaction.

In order to determine if there was a statistically significant difference for the amount of interaction time used between Arabs in the Arab-American condition and Arabs in the Arab-Arab condition, and between Americans in the Arab-American condition and Americans in the American-American condition, t-tests were run. No statistical difference was found in either comparison.

Because the interaction time differed the most between the Arab-Arab condition and the American-American condition, a t-test was also run to see if Arabs used significantly more time in their interactions. Again, there was no significant statistical difference.

In examining the range of time used for interaction in the three conditions, it was found that the smallest time elapsed in the American-American interactions: six minutes. The greatest elapsed time was in the Arab-American interaction: 34 minutes. Table 2 indicates the

range of interaction time for each of the three experimental conditions.

Table 2

Range of Interaction Times for the Three Experimental Conditions

	Arab-American	Arab-Arab	American-American
Minimum- Maximum Interaction Time: Minutes	7-34	11-31	6-29
Range: Minutes	27	20	23

As can be seen in Table 2, the interaction time range was least for the Arab-Arab condition, showing that there was less variation than in the American-American condition, and thus, greater homogeneity. In contrast, the Arab-American condition shows the greatest amount of variation in interaction time. But note that the shortest time taken for Arab-American interactions was still greater than the shortest time taken in the American-American condition.

Analysis of the Populations

This discussion has focused on the analysis of results as they pertain to each of the three experimental conditions. However, it is also possible to organize

the data such that the two subject populations, Arab and American, can be examined. A comparison of the scores for exchange outcomes of the Arab and American subjects shows very little difference between the two groups. The 24 experimental sessions yielded a total of 1719 points for Arab subjects and 1704 points for American subjects. The mean score for the Arab subjects was 71.63; the American mean score was only slightly less, 71.

The difference in summed scores between the populations, 15, was less than the difference of 28 observed in the Arab-American experiments. This means that the Arabs, when negotiating with Arabs, earned 13 fewer points than did Americans when negotiating with Americans. That fewer points were earned in the Arab-Arab interactions is explained by the higher rate of holdouts under that condition, for in the case of any holdout, no points were earned for that trial by either subject. (See Table 1).

An examination of the interaction time for each of the subject populations shows that Arab subjects spend a slightly longer time period in bargaining than the American subjects. The mean interaction time for Arab subjects was 19.17 minutes, while the mean interaction time for American subjects was 17.75.

While the score differences were too small to interpret, and the time differences for populations were

not statistically significant, the greater time taken by Arabs deserves some comment. It should be noted that the mean time taken in the Arab-Arab interactions was greater than the mean time taken in American-American interactions, with Arab-American interactions falling between the two. (See Table 1). This implies that the medial time of the Arab-American interaction was due to the propensity of Arabs to bargain longer than Americans, an interpretation also suggested by the population sums.

### Verbal Strategies

Analysis of the verbal strategies used by subjects in this study involved content analytic coding of the statements into a number of categories, based on Sillars's coding system. (See Chapter Two.) These categories were grouped as Avoidance Acts, Distributive Acts, and Integrative Acts. For the purposes of analysis, the data is presented for both the total number of statements made by subjects and the percentages of those statements which fall into the Avoidance, Distributive, and Integrative categories.

Table 3 shows the mean total count of verbal statements used by subjects in each of the three experimental conditions. The mean total count for verbal strategies (and that count divided by the mean interaction time) were based upon the summation of both participants' total

counts. When calculating for the mean count adjusted for interaction time, the total count for both subjects was the basis for that ratio.

Table 3.

Mean Verbal Strategies and Their Rate by Type of Interaction

	Arab-American	Arab-Arab	American-American
Mean Total Count for Verbal Strategies Used in Interaction	44.19	46.37	39.62
Mean Total Count for Verbal Strategies Divided by Mean Time Used in Interaction	2.36	2.39	2.30

It can be seen from Table 3 that there is a positive correspondence between the amount of verbal statements used by subjects in the three conditions and the amount of time used in interaction (as given in Table 1). In both cases the largest numbers were produced for the Arab-Arab condition, then for the Arab-American condition, and last for the American-American condition. The calculation for the mean total count of verbal statements when adjusted

by interaction time shows that the rate of verbal statements was similar for the three conditions. The similarity of those rates implies that the inter-cultural interactions were similar to the mono-cultural interactions, at least insofar as rate of verbal strategies is concerned.

It might appear that the Arab subjects were generally more "talkative" and that the results for the Arab-American condition were actually a kind of averaging of the higher level of talkativeness shown by the Arabs in the Arab-Arab condition and the lower level of talkativeness produced by the Americans in the American-American condition. However, an examination of the raw data shows that this was not the case. (See Appendix F). In looking at that data it can be seen that, in the Arab-American condition, the American subjects had higher frequency counts than the Arab subjects in seven of the eight experimental sessions. In the one session in which the Arab subject had a higher total count for verbal strategies, that value was only one point higher than for the American subject. Thus, it would not appear that these results are merely a measure of "talkativeness" by cultural group, but that the intercultural interaction may have had special dynamics of its own.

The raw data in Appendix F has been recorded such that, for one member of each dyad in each condition, the scores reflect the number of verbal strategies used in



descending order of frequency. From this ordering it can be determined whether there was any correspondence between frequency of strategies employed by the subjects as they were paired in experimental sessions. In fact, it was found that, in most cases, the rank of verbal strategy count of the two subjects was the same. Such was the case in all of the Arab-American interactions and in all the American-American interactions. The Arab-Arab condition showed only two exceptions. In one case, the rank order was off by only one place; in the other case the placement was off by only two. This data suggests that the context of the interaction was an important determinant of the subjects' behavior, for, within that context, the two influenced each other's behavior.

Did winners employ more strategies than losers? Is there a relation between the frequency of verbal strategy and success in exchange? For all three conditions, there were 19 experimental sessions which resulted in winners and losers (five of the sessions resulted in tied scores). Of those 19 sessions, in 8 the winner had a higher count for frequency of verbal strategies; in 11 the winner had a lower count than his fellow participant. For the Arab-Arab condition in which there were a total of 7 winning sessions, 3 of the winners had a higher count and 4 of the winners a lower count. The American-American

conditions also resulted in seven winning sessions. In them, three winners had lower counts and four winners had higher. However, in the Arab-American condition, only one winner used more verbal strategies than his partner; in the other four cases the winner used fewer. Thus greater frequency in verbal strategy was not related to winning for Arab subjects and not strongly related for Americans.

Because the greatest difference in frequency of verbal strategy occurred between the Arab-Arab condition and the American-American condition, a t-test was run. No significant difference in mean frequency was found. In addition, the mean frequency of the Arab-American condition was compared to the mean frequency of both mono-cultural groups together. Though the mean frequency of the Arab-American condition of 707 was higher than the mean frequency of the mono-cultural conditions (688), the difference was not significant.

Ignoring tests of significance, these data imply that the interaction in the inter-cultural condition consisted of more than just the averaging or combination of cultural traits demonstrated by subjects elsewhere. While Arab subjects in the mono-cultural condition exhibited the greatest frequency of verbal strategies of any of the conditions, they had fewer counts in the Arab-American condition than their American cohorts. In addition,

while greater frequency of verbal strategy proved to be a winning strategy only in the American-American condition, the Arab subjects in the Arab-American condition (who won more often than the American subjects) demonstrated the least use of greater frequency as a winning strategy. Clearly, there were some differences of style and strategy in the inter-cultural interaction which cannot be accounted for by cultural traits.

#### Categories of Verbal Strategies

The results showing the use of verbal strategies by category type, as determined by the content analysis, are reported in Table 4. The Arab-American condition has been reported in two ways: by the cultural group of the subjects and by who won and who lost the exchange. The other two experimental conditions have been reported by winner and loser only. The winner-loser delineation has been used in order to judge subjects' effectiveness in using the various categories. For that reason, the results for subjects who generated tied scores have been excluded from the analysis.

The percentages shown were produced by generating percentages for the frequency of a particular category as compared to that subject's overall frequency of verbal strategy. From those percentages, the mean percentage for the group was calculated. This was done so that

the results for subjects who had a larger number of statements would not overwhelm the data from subjects with lower numbers. By using proportional communication, each subject's use was weighted equally.

Table 4

Percentage of Avoidance, Distributive and Integrative Categories by Experimental Condition

	Arab/American		Arab/American	
	Arab - American		winner - loser	
Avoidance: % of Statements	9.8	16	14.2	11.6
Distributive: % of Statements	31.8	45	31.8	45
Integrative: % of Statements	58.2	38.6	53.6	43.2

	Arab/Arab		American/American	
	winner - loser		winner - loser	
Avoidance: % of Statements	6	9.14	16.4	14.85
Distributive: % of Statements	45	47.71	41.14	36.28
Integrative: % of Statements	48.57	43	41.28	48.42

In examining the data for the Avoidance category, it can be seen that, for the Arab-Arab condition, winning Arabs used fewer avoidance statements than losing Arabs. This is in contrast to the American-American condition, in which winning Americans used a greater number of Avoidance statements than the losers. In the Arab-American condition, Arab subjects (winning or losing) used fewer avoidance statements, while the American subjects (winning or losing) used a great number. This distinction may well indicate a cultural difference.

This same pattern occurred in the use of statements coded as Distributive strategies. Arabs used distributive acts less often as winners in the Arab-Arab condition and less often as winners or losers in the Arab-American condition. In contrast, American subjects who were winners in the American-American condition used distributive strategies more often, as they also did in the Arab-American condition.

This pattern is reversed in the Integrative category. American winners in the American-American condition used integrative strategies less frequently than the losers; they also used integrative strategies less than Arab subjects in the inter-cultural condition. However, Arabs in the Arab-Arab condition used more integrative statements to win, as they also did in competition with Americans in the Arab-American condition. This is reflected in the

data for each cultural group and for the winner-loser group.

It would appear then that Arabs used more integrative and less distributive strategies than the American subjects. This is particularly interesting in light of the research which represents Arabs as being highly competitive and aggressive in conflict situations.

#### Index of Evenness of Distribution in Categories Used

One of the hypotheses of this research was that the use of a greater range of verbal strategies would result in more effective bargaining. In order to infer that range, the following procedure was developed. For each subject, the percentage for the category with the second greatest frequency was taken, regardless of the type of category. The mean for each group was then the mean of these percentages. In interpreting the mean value, it should be pointed out that the distribution of counts among the three categories was very uneven. That is, about 10-15% of the counts were in the avoidance category with the rest falling in distributive and integrative. Therefore, a large count in the second highest category implied a relatively even distribution between the two categories with the highest frequency of counts. Thus a percent for the second category of as high as 36.4, as occurred for the Americans in the Arab-American interaction, indicated a more even distribution than the 29.8 of the

Arabs. Again, as this interpretation was concerned with effectiveness in bargaining, tie scores were not included in the calculation. Table 5 shows the results of this analysis.

Table 5

Index of Evenness of Distribution of Verbal Strategies  
by Type

	Arab/American		Arab/American	
	Arab-American		winner-loser	
% of Middle Category	29.8	36.4	34.4	31.6
	Arab/Arab		American/American	
	winner-loser		winner-loser	
% of Middle Category	37.1	31.5	34.3	31.3

In general, winners had better distribution by this measure than losers, as measured by the mean of the middle score category. For the Arab-American condition, Arab subjects won more often but their distribution was not as good. However, as was seen earlier, this is a result of the heavy reliance on integrative tactics shown by the Arab subjects in this condition.

### Illogical Communication as a Measure of Communication Barrier

One measure for the existence of communication barriers is the presence of illogical communication statements in the interaction. These communications may be statements that are meaningless in the context of the conversation or are not logical responses to statements by another person in the interaction. In bargaining situations, such as this experimental study, offers or bids which do not fit the logical sequence of bidding may be considered illogical communications.

For the purposes of this research, the incidences of these illogical communications were recorded during the coding of the sessions. Such statements were considered to be indications of communication barriers. Of interest was whether such communications occurred, whether the barriers they indicated were surmounted (or lead to communication breakdown), and whether their occurrence varied by experimental condition or cultural population.

Illogical offers were noted when a subject, usually in response to an offer from the other subject, made an offer which was less favorable to himself. Such offers could be considered illogical only when they were in the context of competitive bargaining interactions. On a few occasions, subjects chose to make only equitable



exchanges. On those occasions, a subject sometimes rejected a more favorable offer and made an offer less favorable to himself. However, since it was clear that the less favorable offers were made to maintain equity in the exchange interaction, those events were not coded as illogical.

Only one illogical offer occurred in the Arab-American and only one in American-American conditions. (In the Arab-American condition, that offer was made by an Arab subject.) In both cases, the bidding error did not lead to communication breakdown. Rather, the error was immediately corrected and the bargaining continued. In the Arab-Arab condition, two illogical offers occurred. In those cases as well, the offer was immediately corrected; no breakdown in communication occurred. In one of those instances, the correction was made at the suggestion of the other subject, who simply said, "You don't mean that."

Only one other instance of illogical communication occurred in any of the three conditions. In one instance, an Arab-American bargaining session, the subjects briefly discussed an aspect of the scoring, and, in so doing, talked past each other. That dialogue lasted about 30 seconds, at which point the Arab subject rephrased his original statement and the American subject said, "Oh, I

see." Then the subjects were able to resume bargaining and had no further problems.

Indications of communication barriers occurred rarely. In all cases subjects became aware of their errors and corrected them. Only one of these errors occurred between two Americans; for Arabs, the frequency of occurrence was the same for Arab-American and Arab-Arab interactions. It may be that the latter events stemmed from the difficulty, for Arabs, of thinking and speaking in a second language. In any case, as a consequence of the logic of the bargaining process, those errors were easily corrected and at no time resulted in communication breakdown.

### Questionnaire Results

A questionnaire was administered to subjects at the conclusion of each experimental session. (See Appendix B.) It consisted of fairly open questions; it was hoped that subjects' responses might enrich and enhance the other data. Those responses which were quantifiable are reported in Appendix G. Responses by subjects did not indicate any major differences among the experimental conditions. However, in looking at the responses when grouped by cultural background, both similarities and differences appear between the Arab subjects and the

American subjects.

When asked how they felt about participating in the experiment, subjects' responses, both Arab and American, were generally favorable. Most subjects responded that it was fun or challenging. However, three Arabs (13% of the Arab population) indicated that they found it to be unpleasant or that they did not like bargaining. Their comments included, "Making an exchange was most of the time unpleasant.", "For me, it is an unpleasant event all the time,", and "It was fun, but I don't like to bargain."

Seven American subjects (29% of the American population) expressed negative opinions about the experiment. One felt "tense and apprehensive"; one did not like being in the "powerful" position. Five of the subjects expressed displeasure with losing and with being in the less "powerful" position.

These responses are suggestive. The negative Arab responses implied a dislike for the bargaining situations generally. The negative American responses indicated a more competitive attitude, with displeasure stemming from being in a less "powerful" or "losing" position.

In comparing the experiment to other situations in which they have bargained, some subjects, both Arab and American, noted that the chips had no real value.

Generally, Arab subjects made more further comparisons. Their comments included that it was easier than other bargaining experiences, that one had absolute power as A not present in real life, that one had little control, that the experiment took a longer time period than other bargaining experiences, or that the time was too short to effectively bargain.

As to their perceptions of how the other subject felt in the experiment, 60% of the respondents felt that the other subject felt good about the experiment, or "about the same" as they did. Some subjects did note that their opponent was apprehensive or unhappy about the exchanges. These comments were usually made by the winners of the exchanges.

Subjects' responses to the question concerning their purpose in the experiment generally indicated understanding of the game, that is, negotiating to gain as many points as possible. One American subject (who arranged absolutely equal exchanges throughout his experimental session) noted that his purpose was to see "how society has effected our understanding of the concept of exchange." One Arab subject listed one of his purposes as being to "observe the other person and how he thinks."

The majority of the subjects (73%), Arab and American,

were satisfied with the exchanges they made. However, four Arabs (17%) and eight Americans (33%) were dissatisfied. In most of the cases of dissatisfaction, those subjects had lost in the exchange.

Of the Arab subjects, four would have preferred more time for the experiment; seven would have preferred less time. One Arab subject noted that, while the amount of time was satisfactory, he would have preferred more "variables", "bribes" and "distractions". Only two American subjects wanted more time, but eight would have preferred less. Only a few subjects, either Arab or American, felt that the time limit affected how they acted.

A majority of the subjects reported that they were fair to the other subject (77%) and that the other subject was fair to them (65%). A few of the Arab and American subjects felt that they were fair to the other subject, but were not treated fairly. Some of the subjects who won were uncomfortable about how they had treated the other subject; some confessed to lying and "taking advantage". One American subject inquired, "Who's to decide what's fair?" Another stated that fairness was not the point of the game. One Arab subject said that fairness was relative. Generally, there did not seem to be any great difference in how Arab and American subjects viewed the

issues of equity and fairness.

Consistent with their positive reactions to participating in the experiment, almost all the Arab subjects indicated that they liked bargaining to reach a decision or make an exchange. One subject indicated that it saved money; another that it was a good way to get to know people. Three subjects (who have been previously reported as being unhappy about the experiment) found bargaining to be unpleasant. Five American subjects expressed some reservations about bargaining to reach an agreement. One of these subjects reported that he had been a salesman and found haggling unpleasant.

A majority (64%) of the subjects felt that they were good bargainers. Several Arab subjects indicated that their success at bargaining was qualified. That is, it was dependent upon the situation, who they were bargaining against, and what they were bargaining for. Very few subjects (Arab or American) commented negatively about their opponents' bargaining skill.

Both Arab and American subject groups named similar consumer commodities when asked about real-life situations in which they had to bargain. The most common of these was the purchase or sale of a car. Other consumer commodities mentioned were stereos, bicycles and houses. Trading baseball cards was a bargaining situation mentioned only by some Americans. Arabs mentioned shoes, books and

carpets as other consumer items to be negotiated. Similar bargaining events mentioned by American subjects included Monopoly games, relations with parents and friends, negotiations with professors about grades, and shopping in markets in foreign countries (Israel, Mexico). Arab subjects made no mention of negotiations with friends or relatives, but referred to shopping in marketplaces at home (Lebanon, Kuwait, Sudan, Egypt). Arab subjects also mentioned negotiating with professors for grades. Political issues were mentioned as real-life bargaining situations by Arab subjects.

In discussing when bargaining would be inappropriate or wrong, there were similarities and differences between Arab and American subjects. Arab subjects most frequently noted specific items or situations in which bargaining was not practical: when prices are fixed, in restaurants, when exchanging currency, attending movies, in U.S. clothing and department stores. On a more general level, they also frequently mentioned that it was useless to try to bargain when the other person was an employee, and thus had no authority. Ethical considerations arose. Some instances cited included when the other person does not want to negotiate, or when the seller is honest.

Americans also cited some specific conditions such as when prices on certain items are fixed and, more generally, when the employees do not have the authority

to make a deal. However, more of their responses to this question dealt with more abstract issues: when there is mutual interest, when the price is fair, when something is bought for a cause, when bargaining makes people unhappy, and, frequently mentioned, in life or death situations. Also mentioned as inappropriate was plea bargaining in the U.S. judicial system.

It might be that there were fewer ethically inappropriate instances for bargaining mentioned by Arabs because they viewed bargaining as much more a marketplace phenomenon. While American subjects mentioned negotiations with parents and friends, and doing favors for and paying off debts to friends as real-life bargaining situations, no such mention occurred at all in the Arab subject responses. That distinction may represent a cultural difference. Arabs may not perceive their interactions with people close to them as bargaining relationships, or perhaps they do not enter into negotiations with friends and intimates. Another possibility is that Americans have a broader definition of negotiation than Arabs.

#### Impressions of the Experimental Process

Having observed the process of the experiment over 24 trials, a number of impressions concerning the processes were formed by the experimenter. In some cases these impressions were consistent with findings discussed



above. In other cases, the impressions concerned further information not covered by the formal procedures of data collection. In some few cases those impressions were not completely consistent with the results of the content analytic procedures. Since this is an exploratory research project, some comments on these impressions may be in order.

As was reflected in the content analysis, Arab subjects were more integrative than American subjects. However, some parts of that integrative attitude were not fully captured by the analysis. One striking example was the use of "I" and "you". American subjects, in statements which were both distributive and integrative, tended to be directive toward the other person. "You should do...", "If you don't...", "You're not being fair...", and "This is a good deal for you..." were all common American statements. In contrast, Arab subjects used statements such as, "I feel we should...", "I need to have...", and "I may be forced to...". Due to this phrasing distributive statements were less confrontational.

Other observations which seemed not to be captured within the framework of the content analysis scheme pointed to distinct style differences between Arab and American subjects in bargaining interactions. Body language was one important distinction. American subjects

did not use a wide variety of gestures, but, instead, tended to have one of two distinct postures. They either hunched over their chips with their elbows (and sometimes forearms) on the table or they reclined in their chairs away from the table. In contrast, Arab subjects were much more animated. Their postures at the table varied drastically. They leaned forward; they leaned back. They made eye contact significantly more often; frequently used hand gestures. While Americans sometimes played with their chips (frequently in what appeared to be a nervous gesture), Arab subjects used their chips as an extension of their bargaining strategies. When offers were being made, Arabs frequently counted out (very slowly) the number of chips to be offered. Those chips were sometimes then moved closer to the other subject to intrigue or tantalize him. Then, if that bid was refused, the Arab subject slowly moved his chips back to his part of the table.

A basic attitude difference about the nature and purpose of bargaining between the Arab and American cultural groups was also observed. American subjects tended to either be competitive or to opt for total (or almost total) equity. Arab subjects seldom opted for total equity. They were competitive, but that competitiveness was couched in terms of mutual benefit.

They recognized that, while they were in competition, that the competition was about the amount of mutual gain both would achieve. One Arab subject was particularly adept. He continually reminded his Arab fellow subject that their goal was the same: maximum mutual benefit. In doing this, he very carefully phrased almost all of his statements, whether distributive or integrative (although he used more integrative statements), so that there was little chance of outright rejection. For example, he might say, "If this offer is not good, what would be?" Invariably, his fellow subject's counter offer was a little more beneficial to him than the previous one.

However, there were also similarities between the two groups. Whereas experimental research is often accused of being sterile and non-realistic, this research was designed so that, within the rules for exchange, individuals could devise their own strategies and interpretations. In fact, subjects from both cultures frequently used imagery to enliven the bargaining process. Chips became cars, houses, stock options, and other business deals. This kind of imagery was prevalent for both Arab and American subjects. While a particular definition or "story line" was usually not used throughout the interaction, imagery and one or more story lines frequently crept into the interaction. Imagery

was frequently used to justify or explain a particular offer or position. "My kids need new shoes," "My boss told me this was as far as I can go," and "Maybe your business will be stronger next year," are examples of this imagery.

Like the presence of imagery in the interaction fictitious side payments were introduced. The experimental instructions forbade any long term agreements between subjects. However, they did not address the issue of side payments. While no exchanges included real side payments, they were frequently a dynamic part of the interaction. One American subject (recruited from the same class as his fellow participant) offered one test answer for the final as part of his bid. Another American subject (again a classmate of his fellow participant) offered a date with his sister, who had been met by the other at a bar the previous week, as part of his "final" offer.

Arab subjects were not immune to the offering of side payments. In line with the imagery occurring at that point in the bargaining, one Arab subject, when told by his fellow subject that he "could not afford that offer", then offered a low interest loan to make a deal that would pay off later. Another Arab subject mentioned that his scholarship sponsor (a multi-national corporation) would look kindly on acceptance by the other of his offer.

Finally, Arab subjects made a number of comments that indicated a greater familiarity with and enjoyment of the bargaining process than American subjects. One Arab subject, when recruited for the bargaining experiment, asked, "Is this bargaining American style or Egypt style?" Another Arab subject, who indicated on the questionnaire that there was not enough time for bargaining in the experiment, explained that he had spent one month negotiating to buy a car from a used car dealer in his home country. During that month, he had gone to the dealership daily, sometimes looking at cheaper cars, sometimes critically examining the car he wanted, and occasionally making a new bid for the car he wanted. Most gratifying was the subject who stated that he had not had a chance to do any bargaining since he left home and that, in its absence, he was a little homesick.

#### Comments

Detailed comments and interpretations of the results are found in the concluding chapter. However, some general observations should be mentioned at this point. There were no statistically significant differences in bargaining effectiveness between Arab and American subjects in the study, although there is some evidence that Arab subjects were slightly more effective in bargaining. Also clear from the data is that there were no

communication barriers due to cultural difference that proved to be a hindrance to interaction. The data also indicates that Arabs were more integrative than Americans in their bargaining style. Finally, although there was no real value for the chips used for negotiation, subjects in all conditions persistently and enthusiastically bargained to achieve their exchange outcomes.

## Interpretations and Conclusions

The experimental results did not support the hypothesis that Arab subjects would use more types of verbal strategies than the American subjects. In fact, it was found that Arab subjects, taken as a whole, showed greater flexibility in the use of verbal strategies than the American subjects. American winners and losers in both the Arab-American and American-American conditions demonstrated very similar kinds and range of use of verbal strategies. However, the Arab subjects who won in the Arab-Arab condition used a much greater range than the Arabs in the Arab-American condition, even though Arabs won in the majority of the latter interactions. In that condition, Arabs showed the smallest range of any of the subject groups. At least in part, this was due to their dominant use of integrative tactics. While Arab subjects were not shown to use a greater number of types of strategies, these comparisons imply that they are more flexible in choosing effective bargaining strategies.

Hypothesis Two stated the greater the number of types of verbal strategies used, the greater the bargaining effectiveness. This hypothesis is partially upheld by the data. The data show that use of more

types of strategies was marginally more effective; however, there was only a small difference which was not statistically significant. This difference was small in part because Arab winners in the Arab-American condition, as pointed out earlier, did not conform to that pattern.

Hypothesis Three was that Arab subjects are more effective in bargaining than American subjects. As based upon Hypotheses One and Two, it cannot be upheld since the earlier hypotheses were not. Nevertheless, the results indicate that Arab subjects were more effective in bargaining, though the difference was too small to be statistically significant. However, given that a difference in bargaining effectiveness was present, it is possible that a larger sample size would result in statistically significant differences between the Arabs and Americans. It can be speculated that future research might demonstrate greater effectiveness by Arab subjects, and that that effectiveness may be linked to Arabs' flexibility in using bargaining strategies under different interaction conditions, rather than in the amount of range in verbal strategies.

It was also postulated in Hypothesis Four that there would be no significant differences in communication effectiveness between the same culture dyads and different culture dyads. The results of the research indicate that there was indeed little difference in



communication effectiveness, as measured by bargaining effectiveness and the incidence of communication barriers, between the two kinds of dyads. This held for the interaction in all three experimental conditions. In fact, communication barriers were virtually non-existent; a finding that is in contrast to much of the research, addressed below, suggesting its prevalence.

Hypothesis Five stated that, in order to gain effectiveness in inter-cultural interaction similar to same culture interaction, a greater amount of communication would be necessary. The research does not support that hypothesis. In fact, the incidence of communication barriers was so slight that no extra time or communication was needed.

The focus of this research has been, primarily, on four major issues. The first two concern whether Arabs are more effective bargainers, and, if so, can that difference be examined in an American laboratory setting? The fact that Arab subjects could bargain at least as effectively (and in fact slightly more effectively) as Americans in a foreign environment and using a language not native to them, is evidence of their bargaining skill.

The third issue concerned the types of verbal strategies which prove to be effective. Are there

differences in bargaining style and verbal strategies between Arab and American subjects? While it was not found that range or amount of types of strategies used were significantly linked to effectiveness, other points of interest did arise. Both distributive and integrative strategies were found under all three conditions--thus showing the existence of both cooperative and competitive elements in the mixed-motive bargaining game. Of particular significance is the strong evidence of Arab subjects relying on integrative strategies for bargaining. The integrative nature of their interactions with each other, and with American subjects, is in sharp contrast to much of the research as discussed below, as well as the popular view which pictures Arabs as confrontative, emotional and hostile. This research presents a markedly different view.

Fourth, and of central concern was the issue of communication barriers between cultural groups, and whether these barriers can be overcome. The research has shown that communication barriers may not always be as prevalent as has sometimes been assumed. In any event, those barriers which did exist were effectively managed by subjects from both groups.

It was argued for this study that the intentional and interactional nature of negotiation made bargaining

research an appropriate instrument for examining inter-cultural interaction. This was demonstrated to the satisfaction of this investigator. Both Arab and American subjects were able to grasp the principles of the bargaining game and were able to communicate effectively with each other. Further, the cooperative and competitive elements of bargaining, as discussed by Beisecker and others, were present, measurable, and generated lively interactions. That integrative strategies were found to be very effective in resolving the cooperative and competitive interests should be noted.

Research in Arab negotiation behavior, including that of Patai, indicated that the tradition of the marketplace, with its emphasis on bargaining, and the strong oral tradition of Arab peoples, would lead one to suppose that Arabs were effective bargainers. This research upholds that idea. However, also present in the work of Patai, Trice and Mansour was the idea that Arab bargaining would be highly individualistic, competitive and confrontative. This was not shown to be the case.

The anthropologist, Khuri, presented findings which showed Arabs as being not conflictual, but highly integrative in their bargaining. He indicated that, in addition to its economic function, bargaining served

to promote trust and cultivate relationships. The findings of this research are consistent with Khuri's. Arab subjects proved to be highly integrative, seeking mutual benefit while building relational ties. This finding is considered important by the investigator.

Also interesting was that this type of cross-cultural research, inter-cultural as defined by Saral, was possible. Although Hepworth indicated the problems in and questioned the value of doing cross-cultural experimental studies, other scholars, such as Saral, felt that the direction for such research should be inter-cultural. That is, research, including experiments, should address the interaction between individuals of different cultures. This research suggests that this type of research is viable, despite cultural differences and the incidence of communication barriers. In fact, results of this research are more robust in one regard than that of Graham. In his Japanese-American experimental study, communication sometimes broke down to numerical bidding with very little interaction between subjects from different cultures. But that was not the case for this study.

Hall, Watson, Condon and others have investigated the obstacles to communication caused by culture. Their concerns have informed this study. However, it has

been the position and a finding of this research that communication barriers can be recognized and managed by participants in interaction. While perhaps not all barriers can be managed and effectively overcome, this research has shown that they can be under general bargaining and negotiation conditions.

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## Appendix A

### INSTRUCTIONS TO PARTICIPANTS

#### I. PURPOSE OF THE EXPERIMENT

In this experiment, we are investigating certain properties of negotiation and exchange between individuals. We are interested in what goes on during the bargaining process and in what exchanges are made by individuals. We want to thank you at the outset for your assistance and cooperation.

#### II. GENERAL NATURE OF THE EXPERIMENT

In the first part of this experiment, you will be participating in a series of exchanges with one other participant. These exchanges will consist of trading counters (checker pieces) which are assigned certain points. You will have the opportunity to negotiate with the other participant, settle on the rate of exchange you both agree to, and then exchange the counters.

This experiment will be videotaped. After analysis the tape will be erased.

#### III. YOUR GOAL IN THE EXPERIMENT

YOUR GOAL IS TO GET THE BEST SCORE THAT YOU CAN FOR YOURSELF BY ARRANGING THE EXCHANGES MOST FAVORABLE TO YOU.

#### IV. SEQUENCE OF BARGAINING AND EXCHANGE

The time you will spend in each episode of bargaining and exchange is called a "period". There will be 3 periods in the first part of the experiment. One participant will be in the A position; the other participant in the B position. In each period, there will be one opportunity for bargaining and exchange.

1. Black counters will be given to A and red counters to B at the beginning of each period.

2. Each period will consist of one opportunity to negotiate and agree upon an exchange.
3. Counters will be exchanged by A and B when a settlement has been reached.
4. Counters will then be collected and the scores recorded.
5. The next bargaining period will then begin with the distribution of counters.
6. This procedure will continue through all 3 periods.

## V. SCORING RULES

How chips are scored and valued varies with the A and B positions.

### Scoring Rules for A

1. For each bargaining period B will receive ten red chips.
2. Each chip B keeps is worth no points.
3. Each chip received in exchange from A is worth one point.
4. B must exchange all 10 chips as a block.

REMEMBER: For B, the best exchange will be one in which B gets as many of A's chips as possible in exchange for B's own ten chips.

## VI. BARGAINING AND EXCHANGE RULES

1. No exchange may occur unless mutually agreed upon by A and B.
2. Transactions must be independently agreed upon by A and B during each period. Long term agreements extending beyond any one period are not allowed.
3. Participants are not obligated to exchange. If A and B both agree that no settlement is possible, the period ends with no exchange.

General Rule in Negotiation: Bargain first, reach an agreement if you can, then exchange chips.

Remember: Your goal is to score as many points as possible by making the best possible exchange agreement.

These are instructions for the first part of the experiment. This part will last about half the time allotted for the experiment. When the 3 bargaining periods are completed, you will receive instructions for the second part of the experiment.

## Appendix B

Negotiation Session \_\_\_\_\_ Name \_\_\_\_\_

How did you feel about participating in this experiment?

How does it compare to other situations in which you have bargained?

How do you think the other person felt about being in the experiment?

What was your purpose in this experiment?

Were you satisfied with the exchanges you made? Explain.

Would you have liked more or less time to bargain for the exchanges you made?

Did the time limit for each exchange affect how you acted?



Do you think the other person was fair to you? If not, why not?

Do you think you were fair to the other person? Explain.

How do you feel about bargaining to reach a decision or make an exchange? (For instance, is it fun? Unpleasant?)

Do you think you are good at bargaining?

How do you think the other person in the experiment felt about bargaining?

Was he good at bargaining?

Name some real-life situations in which you have had to bargain or negotiate.

Do you think there are times when bargaining is inappropriate or wrong? Give some examples.

Did the fact that your actions were being videotaped affect your behavior? If so, how?

## Appendix C

### CONSENT STATEMENT

The Department of Communication Studies supports the practice of protection for human subjects participating in research. The following information is provided so that you can decide whether you wish to participate in the present study. You should be aware that even if you agree to participate you are free to withdraw at any time.

The study is concerned with certain properties of negotiation and exchange between individuals. In this experiment, you will be participating in a series of exchanges with one other participant. These exchanges will consist of trading chips which are assigned certain points. You will have the opportunity to negotiate with the other participant, settle on the rate of exchange you both agree to, and then exchange the chips.

Your participation is solicited, but strictly voluntary. Do not hesitate to ask any questions about the study. I guarantee you anonymity and confidentiality. Your name or identity will not be associated in any way with the research findings.

Your participation in this experiment will be videotaped. By signing this form you will be consenting to be videotaped. After the completion of this study, the tape will be erased.

We appreciate your cooperation very much.

Sincerely,

Patricia Willer  
Principal Investigator  
843-2620

Signature of subject agreeing to participate

A copy of this consent form is available upon request.

## Appendix D

TABLE 1  
Summary of Coding Categories

Avoidance Acts. Acts which minimize explicit discussion of conflicts.

1. Simple denial. Unelaborated statements that deny a conflict is present.
2. Extended denial. Denial statements that elaborate on the basis of the denial.
3. Underresponsiveness. Failure to acknowledge or deny the presence of a conflict following a statement or inquiry about the conflict by the partner.
4. Topic shifting. Statements that terminate discussion of a conflict before the discussion has reached a natural conclusion.
5. Topic avoidance. Statements that terminate discussion of a conflict issue before an opinion has been expressed.
6. Abstractness. Abstract principles, generalizations, and hypothetical statements that supplant discussion of concrete individuals and events related to conflict.
7. Semantic focus. Statements about the meaning of words or the appropriateness of labels that supplant discussion of conflict.
8. Process focus. Procedural statements that supplant discussion of conflict.

9. Joking. Nonhostile joking that supplants serious discussion of conflict.
  10. Ambivalence. Shifting or contradictory statements about the presence of conflict.
  11. Pessimism. Pessimistic statements about conflict which minimize the discussion of conflict issues.
- Distributive Acts. Verbally competitive or individualistic acts.
12. Faulting. Statements that directly criticize the personal characteristics of the partner.
  13. Rejection. Statements in response to the partner's previous statement that indicate personal antagonism toward the partner as well as disagreement.
  14. Hostile questioning. Directive or leading questions that fault the partner.
  15. Hostile joking. Joking or teasing that faults the partner.
  16. Presumptive attribution. Statements that attribute thoughts, feelings, intentions, or motivations to the partner that the partner does not acknowledge.
  17. Avoiding responsibility. Statements that minimize or deny personal responsibility for conflict.
  18. Prescription. Requests, demands, arguments, threats, or other prescriptive statements that seek a specified change in the partner's behavior in order to resolve a conflict.

Integrative Acts. Verbally cooperative and disclosive acts.

19. Description. Nonevaluative statements about observable events related to conflict.
20. Qualification. Statements that explicitly qualify the nature and extent of conflict.
21. Disclosure. Nonevaluative statements about events related to conflict which the partner cannot observe, such as thoughts, feelings, intentions, motivations, and past history.
22. Soliciting disclosure. Soliciting information from the partner about events related to conflict which one cannot observe.
23. Negative inquiry. Soliciting complaints about oneself.
24. Empathy or support. Statements that express understanding, acceptance, or positive regard for the partner (despite acknowledgement of a conflict).
25. Emphasizing commonalities. Statements which comment on shared interests, goals, or compatibilities with the partner (despite acknowledgement of a conflict).
26. Accepting responsibility. Statements that attribute responsibility for conflicts to self or to both parties.
27. Initiating problem-solving. Statements that initiate mutual consideration of solutions to conflict.

## Appendix E

Exchange Outcome Differences for Each

Experimental Condition: Raw Data

Arab/American	Arab/Arab	American/American
2	36	16
-4	6	4
0	6	-2
-4	-2	1
0	8	0
14	4	-2
0	6	7
20	0	-4
<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
28	64	20



## Appendix F

## Total Count for Verbal Strategy

## Statements for Each Experimental Condition

Arab/American		Arab/Arab		American/American	
Arab	American	Arab	Arab	American	American
109	102	79	56	81	76
64	63	59	56	73	66
54	41	57	56	65	39
50	32	53	35	41	38
47	33	51	36	35	32
28	25	47	45	26	21
15	16	34	33	14	9
15	13	30	15	11	7
<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
382	325	410	332	346	288
<hr/>		<hr/>		<hr/>	
Totals	707	742		634	

## Appendix G

## Questionnaire Responses

How do you feel about participating in this experiment?

Arab  
favorable unfavorable

87%	13%
-----	-----

American  
favorable unfavorable

71%	29%
-----	-----

How do you think the other person felt about being in the experiment?

Arab  
favorable unfavorable

58%	21%
-----	-----

American  
favorable unfavorable

63%	25%
-----	-----

Were you satisfied with the exchanges you made?

Arab  
satisfied unsatisfied

75%	17%
-----	-----

American  
satisfied unsatisfied

71%	33%
-----	-----

Would you have liked more or less time to bargain for the exchanges you made?

more Arab  
same less

17%	46%	29%
-----	-----	-----

more American  
same less

8%	58%	33%
----	-----	-----

Do you think the other person was fair to you?

Arab  
yes no

83%	17%
-----	-----

American  
yes no

71%	29%
-----	-----

Do you think you were fair to the other person?

Arab	
yes	no
67%	33%

American	
yes	no
63%	37%

Do you think you are good at bargaining?

Arab	
yes	no
83%	17%

American	
yes	no
46%	54%

Was the other participant good at bargaining?

Arab	
yes	no
58%	42%

American	
yes	no
67%	33%